BRITISH COLUMBIA | BCStats

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2011 Census: Fast Facts 1.0

Fast Fact: BC Second only to Alberta in terms of population growth

According to the 2011 Census, compared to other provinces, BC's population growth was second only to Alberta over the 2006 to 2011 period. In May of 2011, the census counted 4,400,057 persons in BC, up 286,570 (+7.0%) from the 2006 count.

Components of Population Growth

It should be noted that the characteristics of the population such as age, sex, marital status and mobility won't be available until later in the year and into next year. However, information on births, deaths and migration is collected between censuses and can provide an indication of upcoming census results.

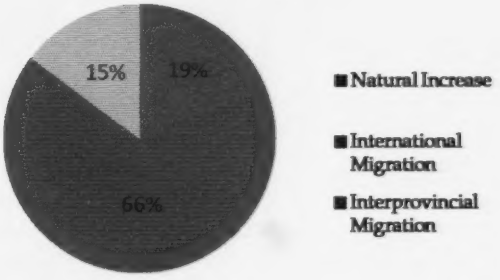
Compared to the previous census cycle (2001 to 2006), population growth accelerated in BC as well as in other provinces and territories.

For Canada as a whole, much of the growth is due to migratory increases as opposed to natural change (i.e., births less deaths). There has been a small uptick in fertility rates but, generally speaking, international movements and in particular the growing number of non-permanent residents has been driving growth.

At the provincial and territorial level however, the composition of growth can vary considerably. Also, unlike migration at the national level, which is strictly international, migration at the provincial and territorial levels can be split into international and interprovincial.

In BC just over 80% of the population gain between 2006 and 2011 was due to migration. International migration accounted for most of the gain (66%), while interprovincial migration represented 15%. The rest (19%) was due to natural increase.

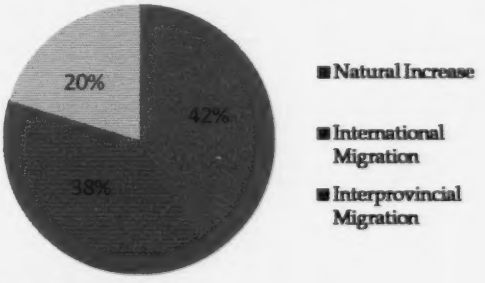
% Contribution to Population Growth by Component: BC, 2006 to 2011



Source: Statistics Canada Demography Division

Conversely, population growth in Alberta was split fairly evenly between natural increase (41.6%) and international migration (38.1%) with interprovincial migration (20.3%) making up the remainder.

% Contribution to Population Growth by Component: Alberta, 2006 to 2011



Source: Statistics Canada Demography Division

Table 1 below shows the components of population growth by province and territory. The data is compiled by Statistics Canada using a variety of administrative sources and modelling techniques.

Table 1: Components of Population Growth: July 1, 2006 to July 1, 2011

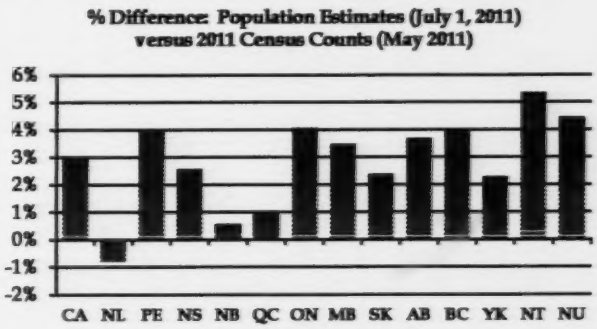
Prov/ Terr	Natural Increase	Net International Migration(1)	Net Interprovincial Migration	Total Growth
BC	**62,414**	**218,766**	**48,561**	**329,741**
CA	677,458	1,229,247	-	1,906,705
NL	432	2,327	-2,494	265
PE	1,291	8,803	-2,159	7,935
NS	3,373	13,043	-8,989	7,427
NB	3,805	9,103	-3,127	9,781
QC	146,846	239,780	-38,515	348,111
ON	254,326	510,682	-57,358	707,650
MB	26,909	57,771	-18,137	66,543
SK	22,490	31,405	11,867	65,762
AB	148,787	136,614	72,699	358,100
YK	832	950	608	2,390
NT	2,586	123	-2,232	477
NU	3,367	-120	-724	2,523

Source: Statistics Canada Demography Division

As noted, much of BC's population can be attributed to international immigration. The majority of immigrants to BC come from Asian countries (70%) and more often than not, their destination is the Vancouver Census Metropolitan Area (CMA). On average, the Vancouver CMA was the destination of choice for 85% of all immigrants over the five years ending in 2010.

Census Counts versus Population Estimates

The components of population growth are used to **estimate** growth between quinquennial censuses. The census counts (taken every five years in Canada) can be very different from the population estimates produced by Statistics Canada. The following chart shows the difference between the 2011 Census counts and the population estimates as of July 1, 2011 (released September 2011) for each province and territory.

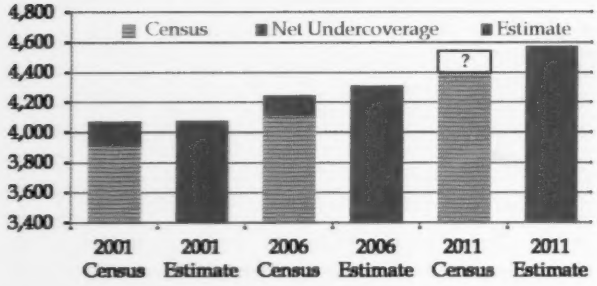


Source: 2011 Census and Statistics Canada Demography Division

With the exception of Newfoundland and Labrador, the population estimates were higher than the census counts. Much of this difference is due to "net under-coverage" in the Census. While the census tries to enumerate the entire population, it will inevitably miss people or count individuals more than once. The difference between the number of people missed and those counted more than once is "net under-coverage." It is called net under-coverage since people tend to be missed more often than they are counted twice.

With every Census, the estimates are evaluated by comparing them to the census counts adjusted for net under-coverage. The following chart illustrates the historical extent of net under-coverage in BC for the past two censuses. In 2001 a coverage adjustment of 4% was applied to the 2001 Census count. In 2006, the adjustment was 2.9%. The lower adjustment in 2006 indicates that there was better coverage than in the previous census.

Population Estimates, Census Counts and Net Undercoverage for BC: 2001, 2006 and 2011



Source: 2011 Census and Statistics Canada Demography Division

Over the next 18 months, Statistics Canada will undertake a series of studies to estimate net under-coverage for 2011. The results of these studies will be available by the Fall of 2013. At which point, Statistics Canada will revise its population estimates back to 2006 to reflect the information gained from the 2011 Census.

It should also be noted that the population estimates are as of July 1, 2011 while the census counts are as of May 2011. Therefore some of the difference can also be attributed to the change in population between the two dates.